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Norway

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I. Introduction

A. General remarks on Norway's UPR follow-up: institutional responsibility and organisation of work

1. Universal Periodic Reviews (UPRs) play an important role in the efforts to ensure that human rights are observed in practice. Following up the UPR recommendations provides an opportunity for critical review of the human rights situation in key areas of society. This report gives an account of Norway's follow-up on the recommendations from the previous review, as well as its efforts to address key human rights challenges in Norway today.

2. Norway's first review in the UN Human Rights Council took place in 2009 and resulted in 115 recommendations. These were compiled into 91 numbered recommendations, of which 66 were accepted in full, five were partially accepted and two were made into voluntary commitments. In June 2012 Norway submitted, on its own initiative, a mid-term report describing what it had done in response to the 2009 recommendations. This second national report should be viewed in the context of the mid-term report.

3. After its first review, Norway set up an inter-ministerial coordination group for human rights issues under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The purpose of the group is to strengthen the implementation of Norway's human rights obligations and improve its reporting to UN human rights monitoring mechanisms.

B. Methodology and consultation process

4. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for coordinating Norway's efforts to follow-up the UPR recommendations in close cooperation with other relevant ministries. In preparing this report, the Norwegian authorities have consulted civil society actors in open meetings, and a draft report was circulated for comment in September 2013. The organisations that participated in the process do not necessarily endorse the content of this report.

5. The Norwegian general election of September 2013 led to a change in government. As a result, this report covers policies of both the old and the new government.

II. Human rights protection in Norway

A. The Norwegian Constitution

6. In 2009, the Storting (the Norwegian parliament) appointed a Human Rights Commission to prepare and put forward recommendations for a limited revision of the Constitution with the aim of strengthening the position of human rights in Norwegian law. In its report, the commission recommended enshrining a number of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights into the Constitution. In 2012, several constitutional amendments on human rights were proposed to the Storting, including all of those put forward by the commission. The Storting will consider these proposals in the three parliamentary sessions following the general election.

7. In 2012, Article 2 of the Constitution was amended. It now sets out that the Constitution shall safeguard democracy, the rule of law and human rights, and specifies that

Christian and humanistic values are the foundation of the Norwegian state. A former provision identifying the state religion as Evangelical-Lutheran was abolished and replaced by a provision stating that the Church of Norway is the national church. Several other amendments to the Constitution were adopted at the same time, making the church more independent of the state.

B. International human rights conventions

8. Norway is party to the vast majority of UN human rights conventions and considers ratifying new human rights instruments on an ongoing basis. In keeping with the recommendations that Norway accepted after its first UPR, the country has ratified two human rights instruments since 2009:

- 3 June 2013, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Norway has not decided whether it will accede to the Optioral Protocol establishing an individual complaints mechanism.
- 27 June 2013, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

9. Ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance could entail amendments to legislation and/or changes in practice, and is being considered by the relevant ministries.

10. In keeping with its voluntary commitments from 2009, Norway has obtained an independent assessment of the possible consequences of acceding to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights establishing an individual complaints mechanism. The assessment was completed in September 2011 and circulated for comment. The Government has not yet taken a position on whether Norway should accede to the Optional Protocol.

11. In the spring of 2013, a similar independent study was conducted on the possible consequences of Norwegian ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on establishing an individual complaints mechanism. Civil society actors and other relevant Norwegian parties were actively consulted in this process. The report was completed in June 2013 and circulated for comment. That same month, the Storting unanimously passed a resolution directing the Government to submit information relating to the question of ratification of this Optional Protocol as soon as possible.

12. A number of human rights conventions have been incorporated into Norwegian law, some by way of the Human Rights Act. Norway has not incorporated additional human rights conventions since 2009, but on a case-by-case basis it considers whether such conventions should be incorporated into Norwegian law, and if so, how. Though Norway has a dualistic system, it is a general principle that Norwegian law is presumed to be in accordance with international obligations. Norwegian law is therefore to be interpreted in such a way that avoids conflict with the rules of international law that Norway is bound by.

C. National human rights institution

13. Since 2001, the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (NCHR) at the University of Oslo has served as Norway's national human rights institution. However, the university's board has determined that the centre is to discontinue its national institution role.

14. In November 2012, the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights recommended that the

NCHR be downgraded from A to B status in the international network of national institutions. An inter-ministerial working group was then established to consider changes to Norway's national institution, including the creation of a new institution with a different organisation and structure. The working group consulted broadly, both nationally and internationally, and completed its assessments in the spring of 2013. The assessment was circulated for comment to a wide range of relevant parties in the summer and autumn of 2013. The Government intends the new institution to meet international standards. It is now considering how the new institution should be set up, and will take into account the comments received.

III. Human rights implementation in Norway, best practices and challenges

A. Introduction

15. Human rights and democracy are key elements of the Norwegian value base. A long-term overarching objective is to ensure that universal human rights and fundamental freedoms become a reality for everyone in Norway, regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, belief, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability or other status.

B. Equal opportunities and non-discrimination

1. New legislation

16. On 1 January 2014, four new anti-discrimination acts entered into force: on sexual orientation, gender equality, ethnicity, and accessibility for persons with disabilities. The last three largely extend existing legislation, but they also contain substantive changes designed to strengthen protection against discrimination. Redress for discrimination in the workplace may now be sought regardless of strict liability. Outside the workplace, liability for redress depends on whether or not the discriminating party has been negligent.

17. The Storting has also enacted into law the right to obtain information about other employees' pay if one suspects pay discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. The new provisions aim to increase transparency with regard to pay in the workplace, and thereby make existing prohibitions against pay discrimination more effective. Amendments to the Anti-Discrimination Ombud Act have also been made to improve case-management capacity at the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal. The Government intends to submit a draft universal equality and non-discrimination act to the Storting.

2. Gender equality

18. Gender equality has been a top priority in Norway for many years, and a wide range of initiatives have been implemented across different sectors of society.

19. Although Norway is regularly named one of the countries where the pursuit of equality has come furthest, there are still gender equality challenges that need to be addressed. The majority of students at colleges and universities are women (60 % in 2010), and many study programmes remain highly gender-divided. Far more women than men work part time. Women have lower wages than men and still assume greater responsibility than men for providing unpaid care. Women with immigrant backgrounds participate at a

lower rate in the labour market than other women, or than men with immigrant backgrounds.

20. A number of measures have been implemented to reduce the pay gap between women and men, including the above mentioned measures to promote pay transparency in the workplace. Other measures have been implemented to help equalise the sharing of childcare and household chores. From 1 July 2014, 10 weeks of the leave period after the birth of a child will be reserved for mothers and 10 weeks for fathers. The remainder may be allocated between the parents according to their wishes. This arrangement presents a good combination of requirements and expectations to both mothers and fathers, while leaving a great deal of flexibility to the individual family. From 1 January 2014, all mothers who work at least a seven-hour day are entitled to a one-hour paid break from work to breastfeed during their child's first year. It is hoped that paid breaks for breastfeeding will help reduce the pay gap between women and men by making it easier for parents to share the parental leave period between them. The Government also intends continue the work to improve the gender balance in education and the workplace, and to reduce the use of involuntary part-time employment. The Government is seeking to increase the proportion of minority women participating in the labour market.

3. Sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression

21. Under the recent act relating to a prohibition against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, the protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation applies to all areas of society with the exception of family life and other purely personal relationships. The act also provides all transgender persons with clear protection against discrimination.

22. The action plan *Improving quality of life among lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons (2009–2012)* was extended to the end of 2013. The action plan's purpose was to prevent discrimination against – and promote better living conditions and quality of life for – lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans persons. One result has been the establishment of a national centre of expertise on sexual orientation and gender identity. This centre identifies, addresses and raises awareness about various challenges related to sexual orientation and gender identity, and keeps up-to-date on developments in the field at national and international level. The evaluation of the plan showed that its objectives in research and knowledge management was or would be reached by the end of the extended period. More expertise will still be needed, though. When it comes to developing services and building expertise among administrators and service providers, more work needs to be done before it can be said that the goals have been achieved.

23. Under Norway's sex-change policy, persons who wish to undergo surgical gender confirmation treatment must agree to be sterilised as part of the treatment. The sterilisation requirement has been criticised by, among others, the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Council of Europe and by user groups. Users have also called for better treatment services for transgender persons in general. In the autumn of 2013, Norway's Ministry of Health and Care Services instructed the Directorate of Health to appoint an expert panel to evaluate the criteria for changing gender, including whether the sterilisation requirement should be abandoned. The Directorate of Health will also submit a plan of action for improving health services in general to the group. Other relevant directorates will be invited to collaborate.

4. Equal opportunities for persons with disabilities

24. The Government is working systematically to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. *Norway Universally Designed by 2025*, an action plan for universal design and increased accessibility for the period 2009–2013, has produced good results. The UN

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities will be an important resource in this field. The Government is convinced that accessibility for persons with disabilities is an important factor for achieving equality.

25. In 2012, the *Jobs Strategy for Persons with Disabilities* was implemented. The goal is that more persons with disabilities will enter employment and fewer will require benefits. The main target group is persons with disabilities who are under the age of 30 and need assistance to find work. The Jobs Strategy takes aim at four barriers that can make it difficult for persons with disabilities to enter the labour market: the discrimination barrier, the cost barrier, the productivity barrier, and the information and attitudinal barrier. The Jobs Strategy sets out a series of measures designed to lower these barriers and to help both job seekers with disabilities and the employers who hire them. Examples of measures include a facilitation guarantee, facilitation subsidies for job seekers and a number of follow-up services. Implementation of the strategy is the joint responsibility of the social partners, disability organisations, businesses, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration and other service providers as well as individual job seekers with disabilities who want to work. The Jobs Strategy was extended and strengthened in 2013, and an evaluation will be completed in January 2014.

New guardianship provisions

26. Amendments to Norway's guardianship legislation to ensure that Norwegian law is consistent with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities entered into force in 2013. The changes include a new act regulating individually adapted guardianship to ensure that those who need assistance to safeguard their financial and personal interests receive this assistance in a way that is respectful of individual dignity and integrity.

White paper on persons with intellectual disabilities

27. In the spring of 2013 a white paper on freedom and equality for persons with intellectual disabilities was presented to the Storting. The white paper identifies challenges related to equal education and training opportunities, health issues and labour market participation for persons with intellectual disabilities, and it examines questions relating to self-determination and legal safeguards.

5. Integration policy and ethnic discrimination

28. The goal of Norway's integration policy is for immigrants to become a part of, and feel a sense of belonging and attachment to, Norwegian society. Labour market participation and good Norwegian language skills are keys to social inclusion. Everyone should be expected, and required, to contribute to the community. One of the priority topics addressed in the *Action Plan to Promote Equality and Prevent Ethnic Discrimination (2009–2012)* is employment and working life. The plan period was extended to the end of 2013.

29. Although the majority of immigrants in Norway are in work, employment among immigrants is lower than for the rest of the population. Unemployment has historically been about three times higher for immigrants, and the employment-rate disparity between women and men with immigrant backgrounds is greater than between the sexes generally in the population.

30. For most people, good Norwegian language skills and familiarity with Norwegian society are necessary in order to find a job and participate in the community. The Government plans to strengthen language training for immigrants. This and other targeted measures are designed to ensure that more women with immigrant backgrounds, as well as men, are able to take part in working life. The Job Chance programme aims to increase

employment among immigrants in general and immigrant women in particular. On 1 September 2013, compulsory tests in civics and Norwegian language were introduced. The Government plans to introduce a requirement that applicants for Norwegian citizenship must pass a civics test and demonstrate a minimum level of spoken Norwegian.

31. The Government intends to pursue a more proactive policy to secure access to the labour market for immigrants. The Government will facilitate faster procedures for the approval of qualifications, efficient assessments of practical skills, and effective utilisation of those skills. The previous Government's third action plan against social dumping was presented in 2013. Efforts to prevent social dumping are being continued through a strengthening of the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority, evaluation of existing measures to address unacceptable pay and working conditions, and consideration of new initiatives.

32. In recent years, the number of people begging on the street in Norway has increased. Most are Roma with Romanian citizenship. This increase has sparked a debate about whether begging should be banned. In 2013, the Storting voted to allow municipalities to regulate begging, and decided to fund certain projects providing acute accommodation and other basic services to foreign beggars.

Statistics and data collection

33. In order to combat discrimination, it is essential to understand its nature, extent and causes. Statistics Norway regularly produces statistics and analyses that form a vital base of information for the authorities. In addition, the *Action Plan to Promote Equality and Prevent Ethnic Discrimination (2009–2012)* sets out several measures aimed at increasing knowledge about the nature, extent and causes of discrimination in various areas of society. Surveys have been conducted to identify the extent to which people with minority backgrounds encounter systematic discrimination in the Norwegian labour market (situational testing). The results of research into discrimination against children and young people have also been compiled.

Hate crime

34. Norway faces challenges related to hate crime and hate speech directed against certain minority groups.

35. The Police Directorate and the Oslo police district produce an annual report of all incidents reported to the police in which hate was cited as a motive. Although the police receives few reports of hate crime incidents, there is reason to believe that the number of unreported cases is large. Several steps have been taken to improve the registration rate. The aim is to learn more about the motivation for hate crimes and about the people who are vulnerable to such crimes, so as to better prevent their occurrence and improve law enforcement in this area.

36. In 2013, the Storting amended the Penal Code to expand the prohibition of certain kinds of public statements so as to include those made on the internet. This means, for example, that encouraging someone to commit a specific offence or glorifying a criminal offence online will now be punishable by law.

6. Indigenous peoples

37. Norwegian legislation is presumed to be in accordance with Norway's international obligations towards the Sami. In accordance with the consultation procedures between the central government and Sámediggi (the Sami parliament), Sámediggi and other affected Sami interests are consulted on matters that may affect them directly. These procedures are

an important tool for ensuring that new measures and regulations are consistent with Norway's international obligations.

38. Several major processes have been instituted to further secure Sami rights. Efforts are under way to follow-up on the Sami Rights Commission II's report on the rights to, and use of, land and water in traditional Sami areas outside Finnmark. In the autumn of 2012, consultations began with Sámediggi on case-management and consultation rules, as called for in one of the bills presented by the Sami Rights Commission II. In addition, in 2012 and 2013 an overview was compiled of the state's follow-up on recommendations made by the UN special rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples in his January 2011 report on the situation of the Sami in Finland, Sweden and Norway. Negotiations on a draft Nordic Sami Convention are also currently in progress. The aim is for the negotiations to be completed by 2016.

39. The Finnmark Commission has been tasked with identifying ownership and usage rights to land and natural resources in Finnmark. A central issue involves rights obtained through prolonged usage. The commission published its first two reports in 2012 and 2013.

40. A review has been conducted of the provisions in the Sami Act relating to the Sami language. It has assessed these provisions in the light of Norway's international obligations, and examined issues related to the implementation of the provisions. The report was submitted to Sámediggi in August 2013 as a starting point for consultations.

Educational rights for Norway's indigenous peoples

41. Pupils at primary and secondary levels in Sami districts are entitled to instruction about, and in, the Sami language. Outside Sami districts, Sami pupils are also entitled to instruction in Sami. However, these rights are not always observed, in part due to a lack of teaching resources. There is a shortage of Sami teaching materials, and it has been a challenge to recruit students into Sami teacher training programmes. Settlement patterns vary greatly, which means that teaching about and in the three Sami languages must be accommodated in different ways. Distance education is offered where it is not possible to provide a teacher in school. In 2013, new web-based information was prepared about the Sami language and Sami-language instruction. Work is also continuing to improve the information about Sami education, culture and traditions that is provided to school administrators, head teachers, teachers and parents. Better ways of facilitating distance learning are being studied as well.

42. Sami subjects are included in the national curriculum under Norway's "Knowledge Promotion" reform. The "Knowledge Promotion – Sami" reform includes Sami teaching plans, revised versions of which are to be in use from the 2013-2014 academic year onward. The revisions include a clarification of learning goals in both the national and Sami curricula, with greater weight assigned to Sami content. To date, Sámediggi has focused mostly on teaching materials *in* the Sami language. Questions relating to educational materials *about* the Sami people will be discussed in meetings with Sámediggi.

7. National minorities

43. The *Action Plan for improvement of the living conditions of Roma in Oslo* was presented in June 2009. The action plan's purpose is to combat discrimination against Norwegian Roma and help improve the accessibility of existing public welfare programmes. The municipality of Oslo, in which most of the Roma live, has established an adult education programme for young adult Roma, an advisory service for Roma, and seminars about the Roma for employees of local and central government agencies. The action plan will be evaluated in 2014.

44. In 2012, the Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities produced a report from a survey on the Norwegian population's attitudes towards Jews and other minorities. The results showed the existence of stereotypical beliefs about Jews in Norway. Overall, 12.5 % of the population hold markedly prejudiced views of Jews. In the European context, the prevalence of anti-Semitic views in Norway is thus relatively small, on par with the UK, the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden. The survey also showed that scepticism in the general population towards Muslims, Somalis and Roma is much greater than it is towards Jews. Persons with the strongest anti-Semitic attitudes are those who also express the most disdainful attitudes towards other groups.

45. Norway's Jewish community presented a survey in 2012 that showed that about half of its members have experienced anti-Semitic attitudes, and that 20 in 21 Jewish children and young people reported that they had been exposed to anti-Jewish harassment. In the national budget for 2014, the Government has allocated funds for an action plan to combat anti-Semitism, including funds for school initiatives and for the Oslo Jewish Museum. Increased funding has also been allocated for security of the buildings used by the Jewish community.

Education for and about national minorities

46. Meeting the educational needs of Roma and Romani/Traveller (Tater) pupils is a major challenge, especially during travel periods. Various measures have been implemented to enable pupils to follow the curriculum, but so far no good permanent solutions have been found. The possibility of developing teaching materials in Romanes and Romani is being considered. One of the challenges is that it is difficult to find people qualified to develop teaching materials in these languages.

47. Pupils with a Finnish-Kven background in the northern counties have the right to instruction in Finnish as a second language in primary and lower secondary schools. As an alternative to Finnish, instruction in Kven may be given in primary and lower secondary school. In some places, training is provided in Finnish or Kven as a second language in upper secondary education. The governors of Troms and Finnmark counties have drawn up an action plan for Finnish as a second language, in part to try to increase interest in the subject. Information material on all of Norway's national minorities is under development. This is primarily intended for teachers, and most of it will be published electronically.

8. Refugees and asylum seekers

48. Norway's new Immigration Act, which entered into force on 1 January 2010, is in accordance with the country's international obligations, such as the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the European Convention on Human Rights and other conventions that Norway is bound by. If doubt arises as to how a provision is to be interpreted, it is the interpretation that conforms to international law that is to be applied when this strengthens the position of the individual. The act further states that persons with refugee status under the refugee convention and persons who are entitled to protection from inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment under other international conventions have equal rights.

49. In 2012, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security issued instructions to the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration on processing asylum applications pertaining to lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or intersex (LGBTI) persons. These instructions set out that it should not be expected, required or assumed that, if returned, LGBTI persons will be able to adapt to social, cultural and legal norms in the public sphere, or hide their sexual identity to avoid persecution.

50. Since 2009, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) has examined the merits of three cases brought against Norway on deportation matters. In two of the cases, the ECHR found that deportation would violate the right to privacy and family life. The Norwegian authorities are following up these decisions.

Right to health services

51. New regulations on the right to health and care services for persons without permanent residence in Norway entitle everyone staying in the country to urgent care and the right to be evaluated by the specialist health service, as well as the information required to exercise such rights. Further, all persons staying in Norway have the right to protection against contagious diseases. Children and pregnant women are to a large extent entitled to the same treatment as permanent residents. Children staying in Norway are generally entitled to necessary help from both the municipality and the specialist health service. In accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the best interests of the child are to be a primary consideration. Adults without permanent residence have a right to physical and mental health care in urgent cases. In addition, they have the right to other medical treatment that should not be postponed. If the person in question is mentally unstable and poses a serious, imminent risk to his or her own life or health, or to that of another person, then he or she is entitled to mental health care. Persons without permanent residence who are serving a prison or other sentence are entitled to necessary medical care that should not to be postponed until they are released.

Housing

52. In 2012, a white paper on the future of housing policy was presented, laying out the main features of an upcoming national strategy on social housing. Housing services for refugees constitute one of several focus areas in the strategy. One of the Government's key aims is faster resettlement of refugees from reception centre to the municipality that is to receive them, and where the integration process can begin with an introduction programme, skills acquisition and language courses. Municipalities settle refugees on a voluntary basis. In recent years the municipalities have not settled as many refugees as needed. There is now a large discrepancy between settlement needs and the number of places offered by municipalities. At the end of October 2013, there were around 5 000 people in reception centres waiting for a municipality to receive them. Several measures have been implemented to improve the situation. In 2013, the Government entered into a new, more binding agreement on settlement issues with the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities. For 2014, it has been decided to increase both the integration allocation to municipalities and the support to municipal rental housing through the Norwegian State Housing Bank.

Minor asylum seekers

53. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is central to the immigration authorities' approach to cases concerning children, and several provisions of Norway's Immigration Act set out that the best interests of the child is to be a "fundamental consideration". A foreign national may be granted a residence permit on the basis of strong humanitarian considerations or a particular connection with Norway, even if the person does not qualify for asylum. A child's connection to Norway will be given particular weight in the assessment.

54. Children between 16 and 18 years of age who have no other basis for residency than the fact that they would lack proper care on return may be granted a temporary permit until they turn 18. This permit may not be renewed beyond the age of 18. Nor does it give rights to family reunification or provide the basis for a permanent residence permit. In other

respects, the temporary permit confers the same rights and obligations as other permits, such as the right to health care services and education. The system of temporary permits was introduced to prevent children without a need for protection from being sent on a potentially dangerous journey to a foreign country. The Ministry of Education and Research intends to circulate for comment a bill on granting persons who are over compulsory school age but under 18, and who apply for a residence permit, the right to secondary or primary education. It is proposed that this should come into effect from the autumn of 2014.

55. A 2012 white paper on children seeking asylum provides an overview of current Norwegian regulations and practices. It also highlights challenges and possible action points. The white paper addresses the situation of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum as well as the situation of children who leave their home country with their parents or other caregivers, and it provides guidance on balancing immigration control concerns with the best interests of the child. In response to the white paper, a study has been initiated to shed light on the living conditions for children during the asylum-seeking process. The study will survey living conditions for accompanied children and unaccompanied minors in reception and care centres, using indicators related to school, day care, health services, child welfare services, physical conditions and social activities.

56. Unaccompanied minors up to 15 years of age are provided with accommodation at special care centres for minors. The child welfare authorities have responsibility for the care of children during their stay, and must provide care services that are appropriate to their particular needs. The immigration authorities have primary responsibility for housing and care services for unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors over 15 years of age, and for refugee minors who enter the country with their parents or other persons. If concerns for a child's well-being are reported, the municipal child welfare service must ensure that the child in question receives the necessary help and care in a timely manner, regardless of nationality, citizenship and residency status.

57. Since 1 July 2013, unaccompanied minor asylum seekers have had the right to a personal representative whose duty is to secure the minor's interests and assist him or her in the asylum process. The same applies to unaccompanied minor asylum seekers who are identified as victims of trafficking. This system of personal representatives is a replacement for and an improvement on the previous system of guardianship for unaccompanied minors seeking asylum.

9. Children's rights

58. The rights and welfare of children have been a priority for many years. Children's rights are secured through the Children Act and the Child Welfare Act. Moreover, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its first two optional protocols have been incorporated into Norwegian law with precedence over other Norwegian legislation. High priority is given to the work of following up the convention and the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Efforts are also under way with regard to ratification of the Hague convention on parental responsibility and protection of children.

Amendments to the Children Act

59. In the spring of 2013, the Storting adopted amendments to the Children Act to place greater emphasis on the child's perspective in civil disputes regarding parental responsibility, place of residence and parental access. The amendments will strengthen the child's position during adjudication of such disputes in cases where the child is at risk of exposure to violence or abuse from his or her parents. The amended act specifies that children under seven years of age must be heard if they are capable of forming their own views on the matter. The child's opinion is to be given weight in accordance with his or her

age and maturity. This amendment is firmly in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

60. At the same time, the Storting amended provisions related to fatherhood and motherhood in the Children Act in order to reconcile the act with major social and technological developments that have taken place in family structure, opportunities for assisted insemination, and definitive paternity determination through DNA analysis.

Child welfare

61. All children in Norway are to be protected from neglect and abuse. Children and young people who live in conditions that can harm their health and development are to be given the help and care they need, when they need it. An increasing number of children require assistance from the child welfare service. Over time, the gap between the number of municipal child welfare employees and the number of cases has been increasing. In recent years, however, the child welfare service has been significantly strengthened. From 2011 to 2014, for example, 890 new child welfare positions at the municipal level have been created with earmarked central government funds, and work is underway to boost skills and expertise within the service. Municipal supervision of children in foster care will be strengthened in 2014. The Government has proposed measures to adapt schooling for children in the care of the child welfare service more closely to their particular needs. This will include closer cooperation between schools and child welfare staff in order to help more of these children complete their schooling.

62. In the spring of 2013, the Storting adopted amendments to the Child Welfare Act to strengthen children's legal safeguards in relation to child welfare services. Among other things, children are now entitled by law to receive adequate child welfare services. A general provision was also adopted emphasising that children are to be given the opportunity to participate in all processes concerning their contact with the child welfare service. Children are also entitled to bring a trusted person with them into child welfare service meetings. Additional amendments were passed to strengthen the supervision of children in foster care.

Social inequality and living conditions for children and young people

63. The Government wants all children and young people to grow up in good, safe conditions that include opportunities for personal development. The proportion of children in low-income families has increased and appears to have stabilised at a relatively high level in recent years. Children of parents with low education levels or weak links to the job market, as well as children from immigrant families, children of single parents and children in large families, are especially vulnerable to poverty. Four out of ten children in families with a persistently low income level are of immigrant background.

64. Increased labour market participation by parents and successful skills acquisition by newly arrived immigrants are essential for combating poverty. Day care centres and schools that help neutralise social differences, as well as access to holiday and recreational activities, are vital arenas for enhancing participation and inclusion among children and young people. The Government is working to reduce the dropout rate in upper secondary school and to make sure that everyone receives high-quality educational services. It will continue to support programmes with a positive effect on Norwegian-language learning, such as free core time in day care centres. The child welfare service is working to strengthen knowledge and skills relating to children with ethnic backgrounds other than Norwegian.

Children vulnerable to trafficking

65. New provisions of the Child Welfare Act that entered into force on 1 August 2012 set out that a child at risk of becoming a victim of trafficking may temporarily be placed in an institution without the child's consent. The purpose of the new provisions is to safeguard the child's immediate needs for protection and care.

C. Efforts to combat violence and sexual abuse

Violence and homicide in close relationships

66. Statistics show that domestic violence is a persistent social problem in Norway, with 9 % of women and 2 % of men having been subjected to violence with a high risk of injury at the hands of a current or former partner. Many more have experienced a lower level of violence or use of force. In recent years the number of incidents of domestic violence reported to the police has increased significantly, most likely due to a growing tendency to notify the police in such cases, which may indicate increasing confidence in police handling of such cases.

67. In the last decade, intimate partner homicide accounted for 20–30 % of the total number of killings in Norway. 15 of 45 victims of homicide in 2013 were killed by a current or former intimate partner. In more than half of the cases in which women were killed, the perpetrator turned out to be the victim's present or former partner. A research project has been initiated to review all intimate partner homicide cases from 1991 to 2011 in order to identify risk factors and develop more effective prevention strategies.

68. The Government will continue to give high priority to efforts to combat violence in close relationships. Measures to prevent violence are also vital for promoting gender equality, since gender-based violence reinforces and underpins discrimination.

69. In 2013, a white paper on domestic violence was submitted to the Storting; this describes measures that have already been implemented, identifies the challenges ahead, and outlines ways of tackling them. The white paper has been followed up with an action plan for 2014–2017.

70. As part of the effort to combat domestic violence, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies was commissioned to conduct a nationwide prevalence survey on violence in close relationships. Funds have also been provided for a five-year research programme to investigate such issues as the causes of domestic violence, domestic violence in a life-long and generational perspective, and particular vulnerability. A national prevention strategy is also to be developed. Cooperation with NGOs will be strengthened though the establishment of a new grant scheme and other measures.

71. The school system, too, has a focus on topics related to family, relationships and sexuality. Teaching plans include goals relating to the development of critical attitudes towards violence, abuse, sexuality-related violence and domestic violence. Additional goals relating to gender roles and equality have been introduced for teaching at primary and secondary school level.

72. To ensure more comprehensive protection for persons exposed to violence and threats, all of the police districts in Norway are to implement the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide (SARA) in 2013/2014. The SARA tool contains a checklist to ensure that relevant information is collected to better assess the risk of future partner violence and take appropriate measures.

New penal code

73. When the new General Civil Penal Code of 2005 enters into force, the maximum sentence for abuse in close relationships will increase to six years, and to 15 years for cruel and abusive treatment. Stricter punishment is also envisaged within the sentencing frameworks. The new Penal Code has not yet entered into force because it will require significant changes to police computer systems. In 2010, meanwhile, amendments were passed to the Penal Code of 1902 that entailed increasing the maximum sentence for abuse in close relationships from three years to four years and significantly increasing the normal penalty level as well.

Forced marriage and female genital mutilation

74. The Government will fight against forced marriage and female genital mutilation. Although many assistance programmes have been established, evaluations of previous action plans show that challenges remain with regard to preventing and obstructing these practices. In 2013, therefore, the *Action plan against forced marriage, female genital mutilation and severe restrictions on young people's freedom* (2013–2016) was introduced.

Crisis centre services

75. The Crisis Centre Act highlights that it is a public-sector responsibility to ensure that persons exposed to domestic violence receive protection, help and follow-up services. The act requires municipalities to make crisis centre services available to women, men and children as well as to offer a comprehensive set of measures tailored to meet individual needs, including those of disabled persons. Crisis centres are to provide users with support, guidance and assistance to contact other service agencies as well as safe temporary housing, a daytime programme, a 24-hour telephone service and follow-up during the reestablishment phase. All services are free, with no referral requirement. The research institute Norwegian Social Research (NOVA) is conducting an evaluation of municipal-level implementation of the crisis centre act.

Treatment services for offenders

76. Measures to help perpetrators of domestic violence are important for the efforts to prevent this form of violence. The Government is therefore strengthening treatment services both for young people who commit acts of violence and for children exposed to violence and sexual abuse. It will fund a collaborative project involving the research and treatment centre Alternative to Violence (ATV), which will strengthen therapist skills in in the field of violence and sexual abuse, as well as increasing the capacity of the family counselling services to provide assistance in this area. In 2013, ATV had 11 offices spread across much of the country.

Violence and abuse against children

77. Preventing violence and abuse against children is a particularly strong priority for the Norwegian Government. Measures to combat violence against children are therefore being continued, as detailed in a new action plan against domestic violence for the period 2014–2017. In addition, a national strategy was announced in 2013 to combat violence and sexual abuse against children and young people in the period 2014–2017.

78. The Government will further develop the family counselling service's work to help abused children through discussion groups, conversation-based therapy and treatment services. Cooperation with other agencies, such as those offering health and child welfare services, will be key. The response to the report on hospitals' ability to identify child abuse

entitled *Oppdager sykehusene barnemishandling?* (Norwegian only) includes the development of health service guidelines to help identify cases of child abuse.

79. Children's Houses are a service for children and young people under 16 years of age, and for adults with intellectual disabilities, who are thought to have been exposed to violence or sexual abuse, or to have witnessed such violence, in cases that have been reported to the police. Children's Houses are child advocacy centres where judicial examination, medical examinations, treatment and follow-up can all be carried out in the same place. They are also focal points for enhancing the skills of professionals who work with children or with adults with intellectual disabilities, and for improving cooperation between agencies in violence and abuse cases. The white paper on domestic violence sets out that more of the children exposed to violence and abuse are to benefit from the Children's House scheme. The service is being strengthened with the addition of two new Children's Houses and increased staffing. Several measures have been implemented to reduce the waiting time before judicial examinations are carried out, a matter that has proved challenging.

80. On Norway's initiative, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden have carried out a joint Nordic police action against persons who share pictures and video clips of child sexual abuse via the internet. Police in Norway "patrol" the internet, to monitor and investigate such criminal activity. A simple-to-use notification system has been introduced on websites frequented by minors, permitting youngsters to report to the police any material or behaviour (such as "grooming") they encounter that may be unlawful. The National Criminal Investigation Service operates a tip line where information about child sexual abuse or pictures showing such abuse can be reported.

Violence against persons with disabilities

81. Research suggests that persons with disabilities are more vulnerable to sexual abuse and violence than the population in general. Among those with disabilities, women are more at risk of sexual abuse than men. To strengthen protection against violence and abuse, measures directed at the health and welfare services and the police have been implemented, as well as measures directed at persons with disabilities.

Rape

82. In 2013, a total of 1 233 rapes and attempted rapes were reported to the police, but the actual numbers are probably much higher. The Government is working to encourage more victims to report incidents to the police.

83. The health services available for the victims of violence and rape have been strengthened with the establishment of reception centres for such victims. These centres are now to be found all over the country. They provide acute health assistance to persons who have been subjected to violence in close relationships and/or sexual abuse. The Government also helps fund the operation of support centres for those exposed to incest and sexual abuse.

84. In 2012, an action plan was presented to combat rape for the period 2012–2014. The action plan contains measures to increase prevention, prosecution and assistance to victims, including awareness campaigns with and for young people, enhanced education about sex and sexuality, guidance materials for parents and preventive efforts involving collaboration between public health clinics and the school health service. Measures to strengthen and improve the investigation and follow-up of cases in the legal system have been designed to produce robust procedures. In its case inspections, the public prosecutor will give particular attention to the handling of rape cases.

85. Partly as a result of criticism from the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Norwegian authorities are considering to propose amendments to the penal provision regarding rape. The matter is under review by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security.

D. Education and training in human rights

86. One of the objectives of the Norwegian school system is to help pupils and apprentices become active citizens. The Government will strengthen school-based instruction in democratic participation through the development of teaching plans and programmes as well as training programmes for teachers and school administrators. Knowledge about democratic values and human rights is vital in order to preserve and strengthen the Nordic social model. The Ministry of Education and Research provides financial support to seven Norwegian peace and human rights centres, to help them to offer children and young people high-quality learning experiences in peace and human rights issues.

87. 2014 marks the bicentenary of the Norwegian Constitution. The celebration of the anniversary seeks to boost democratic participation, particularly in the education sector. In this connection, the website www.minstemme.no has been established to promote learning about democracy and participation in society. The site provides teaching resources as well as school- and kindergarten-level exercises.

Democratic safeguards against racism and anti-Semitism

88. In 2010, a working group was established to propose measures to combat anti-Semitism and racism in schools. One of the group's proposals led to the teaching programme DEMBRA (Democratic Readiness Against Racism and Anti-Semitism), for use in lower secondary schools. The course is intended primarily for school administrators, teachers and pupils, and is arranged by the Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities in Oslo. The centre has also been granted funds for anti-Semitism research and teaching.

E. Judicial system and legal safeguards

1. Police custody and imprisonment

Police custody

89. Norway endeavours to ensure that persons who have been arrested spend as little time as possible in police custody. Those detained are always placed in a single-person cell, but police custody provides little opportunity to spend time outside or to associate with other detainees. Arrest cells are therefore suitable only for short-term custody, and Norwegian legislation sets out that detainees are to be transferred from police custody to prison within two days of apprehension, unless practical reasons make this impossible. The increase in the number of foreign nationals committing criminal offences in recent years has led to prison capacity problems. The UN Committee Against Torture, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and Norwegian civil society organisations have criticised what they regard as a significant number of detainees being held in police custody for more than 48 hours before transfer to prison. The authorities, too, view the situation as highly unfortunate. A number of measures have been taken, including increasing prison capacity, to keep people from having to sit more than 48 hours in police arrest.

90. When there is no available space in prison, the prosecuting authority and courts often release people who under normal circumstances would have been held in prison. Considerable effort is expended on transporting prisoners to correctional facilities where there is space. The authorities will work to acquire better statistics on the number of detainees held beyond the time limit.

Use of isolation in prison

91. Under amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act that entered into force in 2012, it is no longer permissible to hold people under the age of 18 in total isolation during remand custody. Moreover, following amendments to the Execution of Sentences Act, there will be far fewer opportunities to exclude minors from spending time with other prisoners. In principle, prisoners under 18 are only to be kept apart from others for protectional purposes. Stricter requirements for reporting further up in the system were also introduced, and an absolute seven-day time limit will be introduced for the complete exclusion of this age group from the company of other prisoners. The amendments will take effect as soon as the regulations and guidelines are finalised.

92. Norway has been criticised by the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT) and the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention for the use of exclusion under the Execution of Sentences Act as well as for the lack of statistics related to the practice. The committee has also expressed concern over the legal basis for the use of exclusion. In the committee's view, the provisions are not formulated with sufficient precision, leaving the potential for highly discretionary decisions that complicate administrative or judicial review.

93. The Directorate of Norwegian Correctional Services has initiated a process to improve oversight of the use of total or partial exclusion of prisoners from the company of other prisoners. A new IT tool for statistics and analysis, ASK, will be employed to compile the relevant statistics. The first version of ASK, which will generate statistics such as the ratio of prison places to prisoners and the proportion of prisoners who are foreign nationals, was rolled out to a group of pilot users in October 2013. The next priority for ASK will be the use of exclusion. Compiling these statistics will take some time, as it will require changes to other IT systems as well. The directorate estimates that this will be resolved during the first half of 2014.

94. In the meantime, manual calculations on the use of exclusion are being made in every prison three times a year on the same day. The figures are then reported to the regional administrations of the correctional services as well as to the directorate and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security. Four calculations have been made so far. These calculations will serve as a basis for preliminary statistics until the new IT tool becomes operational. This matter is being closely monitored.

95. When the statistics are in place, the current practice regarding exclusion of prisoners from the company of other prisoners will be evaluated and assessed.

Minors in prison

96. The goal is for no minors to be imprisoned except as a last resort. In 2012, several amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act entered into force. Minors may now be held in custody only when compellingly necessary, and a court must consider the question of custody no later than the day after arrest. The court must then reconsider on a two-weekly basis whether custody needs to be prolonged. Measures have also been taken to increase the use of alternatives to imprisonment, including a new sanction called the juvenile sentence. The Government has proposed allocating funds for this purpose in the 2014 national budget.

97. A special prison unit for young offenders was opened in Bergen in 2010 as a pilot project with a view to preventing minors from serving sentences together with adults and ensuring better detention conditions for this group. The establishment of a similar unit in eastern Norway is under consideration. The Bergen unit will now be evaluated. The number of minors in prison has declined since 2010. In 2010, 64 minors were imprisoned compared with 58 in 2011 and 51 in 2012. In 2013, 26 minors had been placed in prison as of November.

98. Norway's reintegration policy, which is designed to ensure the best possible return of former prisoners to society, also applies to persons under 18. This means that young offenders are entitled to all the welfare benefits to which all citizens are entitled, such as housing, work, schooling, health services including treatment for substance abuse, as well as financial counselling. Multidisciplinary teams in the special units for young offenders are to ensure that these young people receive the help to which they are entitled.

Follow-up of prisoners with mental health problems

99. Before a person is placed in police custody, the police must evaluate potential health-care needs and make sure that a medical examination is conducted if necessary. No later than two hours after arrival at the police station, detainees are to receive a brochure containing information about their right to consult with a health-care professional.

100. Prisoners have a right to necessary health and care services, and must be offered services that are equivalent to those available to the rest of the population. The municipality in which a prison is located is responsible for providing health and care services to the inmates of that prison, while dental services are provided by the county authorities. If needed, prisoners are referred for further examination and/or treatment to the specialist health service. A revised edition of the guide to prisoner health and care services was issued in early 2013. It conveys information on how to provide services for prisoners in accordance with applicable legislation.

101. In 2010, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security prepared a report on the special units established for prisoners with mental health problems and behavioural disorders. The purpose of these units is to provide closer and more individual follow-up. The report has been circulated for comment and is still under consideration.

2. Use of coercion in mental health care and in the treatment of certain persons with intellectual disabilities

102. Norwegian law permits the use of coercion in the treatment of certain persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with serious mental disorders under specified conditions. The rules are deemed to be consistent with human rights. The Government nevertheless wishes to reduce the use of coercion, and will ensure that all use of coercion is in accordance with legislation.

103. The Directorate of Health's report on the use of coercion in adult mental health services, *Bruk av tvang i psykisk helsevern for voksne 2012*, shows that the number of involuntary admissions accounted for 16% of all adult mental health service admissions in 2012. The total (corrected for population growth) was reduced by approximately 6 % from 2011 to 2012. In the spring of 2012, a new strategy was established to increase the prevalence of voluntary treatment in the mental health services. This strategy includes obligatory local, regional and national measures to reduce and standardise the use of coercion. With this in view, the Government set the goal of a 5 % reduction in the number of involuntary admissions and treatments in its 2013 instructions to the regional health enterprises.

3. Anti-terrorism legislation

104. Norwegian legislation is to be consistent with human rights, including the right to freedom of expression, the right to religious freedom and the right to privacy. This is ensured through the preparation of the legislation, including the consultation process prior to the enactment of legislation. The Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Act contain provisions setting out that international obligations may limit the applicability of Norwegian legislation, and that human rights conventions incorporated into the Human Rights Act have precedence over Norwegian law. This also applies to anti-terrorism legislation.

4. Human trafficking

105. The Government continues to support the ROSA project, which offers accommodation and support at crisis centres for victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

106. In December 2010, an action plan to combat human trafficking was introduced. Norway has ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings, which establishes a monitoring mechanism to verify that countries are living up to their obligations under the convention. The Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) released its report on Norway in the spring of 2013, and in June of that year the Committee of the Parties to the convention adopted a number of recommendations to Norway to strengthen efforts in this area. The Government will examine the recommendations.

107. Norway is working systematically to improve data collection on human trafficking. From 2003 to June 2013, 42 people were convicted of human trafficking. The national coordination unit for victims of human trafficking has produced statistics showing that 136 persons were identified as new victims of trafficking in 2012. That same year, 349 victims received assistance from the public authorities and other organisations on the basis of their status as victims. Of those, 213 had been identified in previous years.

F. Human rights and international cooperation

1. Human rights in foreign and development policy

108. International human rights set the direction for Norwegian foreign and development policy. The Government seeks to promote democracy, human rights, the rule of law and freedom of expression through its foreign policy. The goal of development policy is to contribute to democratisation and the realisation of human rights and to help people to work their way out of poverty. Efforts to promote girls' right to education in poor countries will be given priority.

109. The Government will work to disseminate knowledge about human rights and to combat various forms of violence and oppression, such as female genital mutilation, forced marriage, trafficking and sexual abuse of children. The Government will direct particular attention to vulnerable groups such as women, children, religious minorities, persons with disabilities and sexual minorities.

110. To ensure that Norway's priorities are followed up in the best possible way in the foreign service, guides have been prepared on promoting sexual and reproductive rights, religious minority rights, indigenous peoples, human rights defenders, sexual minorities and persons with disabilities, as well as the fight against the death penalty.

2. Human rights and the business sector

111. In 2011, the UN Human Rights Council approved by consensus the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Norway was a key player in the process of developing the guidelines.

112. The starting point for Norwegian efforts in this field is the Government's consultative body on corporate social responsibility (CSR), KOMpakt, which includes representatives from government agencies, the private sector, civil society and academia. KOMpakt advises the Government on policy- and decision-making related to CSR matters, including human rights. Another objective is to strengthen the dialogue between government, businesses, special-interest organisations and academia on key CSR topics. In 2013, basic principles were developed under the auspices of KOMpakt for Norwegian companies' dialogue and engagement with stakeholders and interest groups, particularly those active in developing countries and emerging economies. Examples of such groups include indigenous peoples' associations, civil society actors and local authorities.

113. CSR is a high priority for the Norwegian authorities. In 2012, a major international conference, hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was held in Oslo for the purpose of disseminating information about international CRS guidelines and frameworks. Another objective was to foster exchange of knowledge between stakeholders in industry, academia, civil society and government on how best to achieve responsible business practices.

114. Government agencies, such as Innovation Norway with its local offices in Norway and abroad, guide Norwegian businesses on proper business conduct. Companies applying for financial support or guarantees must provide information on their actions within the field of CSR. The information is part of the basis for the agency's decision to grant support.

115. Norway is an active partner in the Global Compact and other international organisations promoting sound business principles and social responsibility. In 2011, Norway launched a reorganised National Contact Point for the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. The National Contact Point carries out its work independently of the Norwegian authorities. It has handled a number of complaints since it became operational.

IV. National priorities

116. Norway will:

(a) International human rights instruments

- Continue its work to ensure correspondence between Norwegian law and Norway's international human rights obligations.
- Ratify and implement the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.
- Consider ratification of the optional protocols on establishing an individual complaints mechanism for the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and for the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

(b) Human rights implementation in Norway

- **National institution:** Consider the establishment of a new national human rights institution in Norway.

- **Discrimination:** Work to combat all forms of discrimination, including discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and disability.
- **Domestic violence:** Strengthen efforts to combat and prevent domestic violence, including various forms of violence and sexual abuse against children.
- **Mental health care:** Ensure fast, easily accessible, high-quality mental health care, and continue efforts to reduce the use of coercion.
- **Social dumping:** Continue to work against the exploitative hiring practices known as social dumping by strengthening the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority, evaluating the measures that are already in place to prevent unacceptable pay and working conditions, and considering new initiatives.
- **Prison conditions:** Ensure that remand in custody and isolation are used in accordance with Norway's international human rights obligations; continue efforts to keep the use of isolation at a low level; continue efforts to ensure adequate treatment and follow-up of prisoners with mental health problems; reduce the number of minors in prison by introducing alternative forms of sanction; and continue to establish a special unit for minors in prison.
- **Education and training in human rights:** Examine lower and upper secondary teaching materials on religion, ethics, outlooks on life and social sciences with an eye to how they handle issues related to anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, racism, extremism and radicalisation; consider opportunities for improving children and young people's discernment regarding use of internet and social media.
- **Asylum and immigration policy:** Continue efforts to ensure that Norway's regulatory frameworks and practices are consistent with international human rights obligations on asylum and immigration.

(c) Norway's international priorities

- Direct more attention to civil and political rights, also in our neighbouring countries.
- Continue efforts to promote and protect human rights internationally, including empowerment of women, protection of human rights defenders, freedom of speech, efforts to end the death penalty, anti-discrimination measures, decent work, corporate social responsibility, support for children in general and girls in particular, and support for minorities including lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons (LGBT) as well as indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities.

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Norway

The present report is a compilation of the information contained in the reports of treaty bodies and special procedures, including observations and comments by the State concerned, and of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and in other relevant official United Nations documents. It is presented in a summarized manner due to word-limit constraints. For the full text, please refer to the document referenced. This report does not contain any opinions, views or suggestions on the part of OHCHR other than those contained in public reports and statements issued by the Office. It follows the general guidelines adopted by the Human Rights Council in its decision 17/119. Information included herein has been systematically referenced in endnotes. The report has been prepared taking into consideration the periodicity of the review, and developments during that period.

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Please recycle

I. Background and framework

A. Scope of international obligations[1]

International human rights treaties[2]

	Status during previous cycle	*Action after review*	*Not ratified/not accepted*
Ratification, accession or succession	ICERD (1970)	OP-CAT (2013)	ICRMW
	ICESCR (1972)	CRPD (2013)	CPED
	ICCPR (1972)		
	ICCPR-OP 2 (1991)		
	CEDAW (1981)		
	OP-CEDAW (2002)		
	CAT (1986)		
	CRC (1991)		
	OP-CRC-AC (2003)		
	OP-CRC-SC (2001)		
	CPED (signature only, 2007)		
Reservations, declarations and/or understandings	ICESCR (reservation, art. 8, para. 1 (d), 1972)	CRPD (declaration, arts. 12, 14 and 25, 2013)	
	ICCPR (reservation, arts. 10, paras. 2 (b) and 3, 14, paras. 5 and 7, and 20, para. 1, 1972)		
Complaint procedures, inquiry and urgent action[3]	ICERD, art. 14 (1976)		OP-ICESCR
	ICCPR, art. 41 (1972)		OP-CRC-IC
	ICCPR-OP 1 (1972)		ICRMW
	OP-CEDAW, art. 8 (2002)		OP-CRPD
	CAT, arts. 20, 21 and 22 (1986)		CPED

Other main relevant international instruments

	Status during previous cycle	*Action after review*	*Not ratified*
Ratification, accession or succession	Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide		
	Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court		
	Palermo Protocol[4]		
	Conventions on refugees and stateless persons[5]		

	Status during previous cycle	*Action after review*	*Not ratified*
Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and Additional Protocols thereto[6]			
ILO fundamental conventions[7]			
UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education			

1. In 2010 and 2011, the Committee on the Right of the Child (CRC) and the Human Rights Committee (HR Committee) respectively urged Norway to consider withdrawing its reservations to articles 10, paragraphs 2 (b) and 3, and 20, paragraph 1 of ICCPR.[8]

2. In 2011, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) encouraged Norway to consider ratifying ICRMW.[9] In 2012, the Committee against Torture (CAT) and CRC invited Norway to ratify OP-ICESCR, ICRMW, OP-CRPD and CPED,[10] while the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) encouraged Norway to consider ratifying CPED and ICRMW.[11]

3. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) stated that Norway was not a party to the 1989 Convention on Technical and Vocational Education.[12]

4. In 2013, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) encouraged Norway to consider ratifying the OP-ICESCR.[13]

B. Constitutional and legislative framework

5. CERD invited Norway to consider incorporating the Convention into the domestic legal order through the Human Rights Act of 1999.[14] CAT recommended that Norway consider incorporating the Convention into domestic law in order to allow it to be directly invoked in court.[15] CRC recommended that Norway continue its efforts to harmonize the law with the Convention.[16]

6. UNESCO stated that defamation was a criminal offence punishable by a fine and imprisonment.[17] It recommended that Norway decriminalize defamation in line with international standards.[18]

7. CERD recommended that the Anti-Discrimination Act be amended to ensure that all grounds of discrimination were subject to prohibition.[19]

C. Institutional and human rights infrastructure and policy measures

8. CEDAW expressed concern that the National Centre for Human Rights could no longer fulfil its mandate as NHRI.[20] CAT urged Norway to establish an NHRI with a mandate in accordance with the Paris Principles.[21] CESCR recommended that Norway put in place a new independent national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles as a matter of priority.[22]

9. CEDAW encouraged Norway to further strengthen the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud by providing it with adequate resources, and consider granting authority to the Ombud and the Tribunal to hear cases of sexual harassment.[23]

10. CESCR recommended that Norway improve the awareness and knowledge of the Covenant through human rights education and training programmes.[24]

11. CRC recommended that Norway introduce budget tracking from the perspective of children's rights with a view to monitoring budget allocations for children.[25]

Status of national human rights institutions[26]

National human rights institution	*Status during previous cycle*	*Status during present cycle*[27]
The Norwegian Centre for Human Rights	A (2006)	B (2012)

II. Cooperation with human rights mechanisms

A. Cooperation with treaty bodies[28]

1. Reporting status

Treaty body	*Concluding observations included in previous review*	*Latest report submitted since previous review*	*Latest concluding observations*	*Reporting status*
CERD	August 2006	2009	March 2011	Twenty-first and twenty-second reports pending consideration
CESCR	May 2005	2010	November 2013	Sixth report due in 2018
HR Committee	March 2006	2009	2011	Seventh report due in 2016
CEDAW	August 2007	2010	February 2012	Ninth report due in 2016
CAT	November 2007	2011	November 2012	Eighth report due in 2016
CRC	June 2005 (CRC; OP-CRC-SC) June 2007 (OP-CRC-AC)	2008	January 2010	Fifth and sixth reports due in 2016
CRPD	–	–	–	Initial report due in 2015

2. Responses to specific follow-up requests by treaty bodies

Concluding observations

Treaty body	*Due in*	*Subject matter*	*Submitted in*
CERD	2012	Discrimination against immigrants; asylum seekers; women, especially those belonging to certain ethnic minority backgrounds.[29]	2012[30]
HR Committee	2012	National Centre for Human Rights; abuses against psychiatric patients; monitoring of and reporting on mental health care; pretrial detention of juveniles.[31]	2012[32]
CEDAW	2014	Violence against women; gender equality in employment.[33]	–
CAT	2013	Solitary confinement; detention of foreign nationals; non-refoulement; missing minors and	2013.[35]

Concluding observations

Treaty body	*Due in*	*Subject matter*	*Submitted in*
		trafficking.[34]	

Views

Treaty body	*Number of views*	*Status*
CAT	1[36]	Follow-up dialogue ongoing[37]

12. With regard to communication No. 312/2007, CAT concluded that Norway's decision to return the complainant to his home country by rejecting his asylum application, despite substantial grounds for believing that he would be in danger of being subjected to torture, inhuman or degrading treatment by the authorities because of his journalistic activities, would constitute a breach of article 3 of the Convention.[38]

B. Cooperation with special procedures[39]

	Status during previous cycle	*Current status*
Standing invitation	Yes	Yes
Visits undertaken	Arbitrary detention (23 April–2 May 2007) Foreign debt (28–30 April 2009)	
Visits agreed to in principle	–	–
Visits requested	–	–
Responses to letters of allegations and urgent appeals	During the period under review, two communications were sent. The Government replied to both communications.	

C. Cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

13. Norway contributed financially to OHCHR in 2010,[40] 2011[41] and 2012.[42]

III. Implementation of international human rights obligations

A. Equality and non-discrimination

14. CAT noted, with concern, allegations of cases of ill-treatment, harassment, incitement to violence and hate speech towards minorities and other vulnerable groups, including persons belonging to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.[43]

15. HR Committee regretted the persistence of hate speech against the Sami people, and xenophobic, anti-Semitic and Islamophobic statements. It urged Norway to raise awareness and promote tolerance and diversity in society, and to train law enforcement officials in the detection and prosecution of hate speech.[44]

16. CEDAW called on Norway to embody the principle of equality of women and men in the Constitution or other appropriate legislation, to adopt a more gender-specific approach for its legislation, policies and programmes; and to raise awareness of the nature of indirect discrimination and the principle of equality for all women, including those from ethnic minority backgrounds and those with disabilities.[45]

17. UNESCO recommended that Norway intensify efforts to counter gender stereotypes and discriminative attitudes and to promote gender equality and equity.[46]

18. CEDAW urged Norway to use innovative measures to target people in the media with a view to strengthening understanding of gender equality; promote a positive and non-stereotypical portrayal of women through education; and monitor the measures taken in order to assess their impact and review them, if necessary, to achieve their objectives.[47]

19. CEDAW expressed concern that the current law on property distribution on divorce (Norwegian Marriage Act) did not adequately address gender-based economic disparities between spouses as a result of traditional work and family-life patterns.[48]

20. CERD expressed concern about the perceived excessive focus on the issues of female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage which might be seen as stigmatizing women and girls belonging to certain minority groups.[49] CEDAW raised similar concerns regarding FGM.[50]

21. CESCR recommended that Norway intensify its efforts, including through the adoption of a new action plan, to prevent discrimination against ethnic groups and promote equality, as well as prevent and combat discrimination against persons from immigrant backgrounds.[51]

22. CERD expressed concern about discrimination against (im)migrants, persons from immigrant backgrounds, asylum seekers and refugees in accessing public services, housing, the labour market and health. It urged Norway to take measures to address that discrimination.[52]

23. CRC urged Norway to combat discrimination against children from minority groups, indigenous children and children with disabilities.[53]

B. Right to life, liberty and security of the person

24. CAT noted that the definition of torture in the Penal Code was not in full compliance with the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. While noting that Norway was drafting a new Penal Code, which would include discrimination based on political views and sexual orientation, CAT recommended that Norway consider amending its current definition of torture to include any form of discrimination as an element of the definition.[54]

25. CEDAW remained concerned that the number of victims of trafficking was constantly increasing.[55] CAT raised similar concerns.[56] CEDAW called on Norway to implement article 6 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, including through, inter alia, implementation of the existing legislation and the new Plan of Action against human trafficking.[57] CRC recommended focusing on child victims of sale and trafficking.[58]

26. CEDAW expressed concern at the high prevalence of violence against women, the high rate of acquittals, and the lenient sentences imposed on perpetrators.[59] It urged Norway to enact specific legislation to put in place comprehensive measures to prevent and address violence against women and girls; to adopt a legal definition of rape in the Penal Code; and

to provide adequate assistance and protection to victims.[60] CAT and HR Committee highlighted similar concerns.[61]

27. CEDAW urged Norway to conduct a study on the possible impact of over-sexualized representation of girls and women in the media on the increasing levels of gender-based violence against women.[62]

28. CRC encouraged Norway to strengthen preventive and protection measures to address FGM, forced marriage and intermarriage.[63]

29. CRC recommended that Norway implement the recommendations of the United Nations Study on Violence against Children (A/61/299).[64] It also urged Norway to ensure that adequate assistance was provided to children and their families, with due respect for other cultures, and that children had information about the helpline and where to find effective assistance.[65]

30. CRC recommended that Norway continue to implement appropriate policies and programmes for prevention, recovery and social integration of child victims of sexual exploitation and abuse; establish more Children's Houses; ensure that exploited and abused children received help as soon as possible; ensure that knowledge of sexual exploitation and abuse was integrated into training programmes for professionals working with and protecting children; and expedite the examination of cases within the 14-day statutory deadline.[66]

31. CAT urged Norway to ensure that prisoners with serious mental health problems received adequate mental health care, by increasing the capacity of in-patient psychiatric wards and providing full access to mental healthcare services within all prison facilities.[67]

C. Administration of justice, including impunity and the rule of law

32. HR Committee recommended that Norway review its free legal aid scheme to provide for legal assistance in any case where the interests of justice so required.[68] CERD was concerned that the legislation concerning free legal aid did not cover cases of ethnic discrimination, and noted that the Parliament was considering whether free legal aid should be granted when legal proceedings were recommended by the Anti-Discrimination Ombud or Anti-Discrimination Tribunal, as was the case with legal proceedings recommended by the Parliamentary Ombudsman. CERD recommended that recommendations for free legal aid made by the Anti-Discrimination Ombud and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal be placed on an equal footing as those made by the Parliamentary Ombudsman.[69]

33. CRC urged Norway to ensure that all children victims and/or witnesses of crimes were provided with the protection required by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and to take fully into account the United Nations Guidelines on Justice in Matters Involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime.[70]

34. CAT urged Norway to improve and update its training programmes for law enforcement officers to sensitize them to appropriate arrest techniques.[71] It also urged Norway to closely monitor the effectiveness of the new procedures for the investigation of alleged violations of the Convention committed by law enforcement officials, in particular where discriminatory treatment based on ethnicity is alleged.[72]

35. CAT urged Norway to ensure that training for law enforcement personnel on the provisions of the Convention, including on the limitations on the use of force and on the principles of non-discrimination, proportionality and last resort to force, were regularly provided. It also recommended the development of a methodology to assess the effectiveness and impact of relevant training programmes.[73]

36. Several treaty bodies urged Norway to strictly limit the pretrial detention of juveniles and adopt alternative measures to pretrial detention;[74] ensure that juveniles were segregated from adult prisoners; and promote alternative forms of punishment.[75]

37. CAT recommended that Norway review its system of preventive detention, and consider abolishing the practice in respect of young offenders.[76]

D. Right to marriage and family life

38. HR Committee urged Norway to assess the impact of the new conditions the receipt of residence permits on the enjoyment of the right to family life, marriage and choice of spouse. Such a study should assess whether conditions should be amended to better respect the right to family life.[77]

39. CESCR recommended that Norway undertake periodic comprehensive reviews of children placed in institutions or foster homes and strengthen its efforts to provide parents with the necessary assistance and support to enable them to exercise their parental role and responsibilities in the upbringing and education of their children.[78]

40. CRC recommended, inter alia, that Norway assist parents to competently exercise their parental responsibilities and enhance the capacity of all professionals and practitioners involved in counselling, conflict resolution or family separation issues to support the continuation of family life or find the most acceptable custody solution and, in the case of divorce or separation, to assist children's contact with both parents, considering under all circumstances the best interests of the child.[79]

E. Freedom of expression, and right to participate in public and political life

41. CEDAW reiterated its concern at the low number of women professors in academia, of women judges at all levels of the judiciary, and the inadequate representation of women with minority backgrounds in academia and in the judiciary.[80]

42. CRC regretted that children have the right to be heard regarding health issues only after the age of 12. It noted with interest that a pilot project in 21 municipalities would allow children to vote in their local elections, from 16 years of age.[81] CRC recommended that Norway strengthen efforts to promote due respect for the views of the child at any age; promote children's participation and assist them to exercise this right; and ensure that the pilot project is supported through civic and human rights education, and that the impact of the project on the citizenship role of adolescents is evaluated.[82]

F. Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work

43. HR Committee and CEDAW recommended that Norway strengthen its measures to ensure that women enjoy equal pay for work of equal value.[83]

44. CEDAW urged Norway to: prevent discrimination against women due to pregnancy and childbirth, and ensure that all women and men are guaranteed paid parental leave; implement policies targeting women to create more opportunities for them to extend their working hours; adopt more vigorous measures to accelerate the eradication of pay discrimination against women; re-evaluate the new pension reform under both the State and the employer-related pension system with a view to identifying any potential disparate impact on women and men, and rectify any disparities; improve the access and participation of women from minority backgrounds in the labour market; and ensure that the

implementation of a gender-equality policy, including pay equity guarantees and the use of special temporary measures, constitutes a legal requirement for granting public procurement contracts.[84]

45. CESCR recommended that Norway intensify its efforts to address the high long-term unemployment rate, including through a review of the impact of measures already taken to reduce this rate, as well as improving the effectiveness of its current vocational, retraining and reintegration programmes, and implementing new and more effective programmes.[85]

46. CESCR recommended that Norway take legislative and other measures to introduce a national minimum wage that would be periodically reviewed and set at a level sufficient to provide all workers and their families with a decent standard of living.[86]

G. Right to social security and to an adequate standard of living

47. CESCR recommended that Norway ensure that the monthly amount of the child allowance provided a sufficient support to families to meet child-related expenses.[87]

48. CRC recommended that Norway: provide the Child Welfare Services with resources to intensify its preventive efforts for families at risk of failing to provide adequate care and support to their children; follow up on children in alternative care, regularly examining the possibility of returning the child to his or her family and, if the child remains in alternative care until the age of majority, facilitate his or her transition to adulthood; and take into account the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (General Assembly resolution 64/142).[88]

49. CESCR recommended that Norway take measures to elaborate and implement a substantially more effective strategy to fight child poverty.[89]

50. CRC recommended that Norway protect children living in poverty against the detrimental consequences of that situation, particularly by specific early care and education, targeted programmes in school to compensate development and learning deficits, measures for better nutrition and health of children from disadvantaged groups and efforts to make municipal housing more child-friendly.[90]

51. CESCR recommended that Norway improve the availability and provision of municipal low-cost social housing units to disadvantaged and marginalized groups and individuals;[91] and take more effective steps to combat de facto discrimination, in particular against persons with an immigrant background, in relation to housing.[92]

H. Right to health

52. CRC recommended that Norway ensure that children have access to good health services, including in schools, throughout the country.[93]

53. CRC expressed concern that the level of substance abuse by children and young people remained high, and was seriously concerned at the number of deaths of young people from drug overdose.[94] CRC recommended that Norway strengthen its efforts to reduce drug abuse.[95]

54. CRC recommended that Norway continue to develop its mental health care system for children and young people and examine the phenomenon of over-prescription of psycho-stimulants to children, and take initiatives to provide children diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, as well as their parents and teachers, with access to a wide range of psychological, educational and social measures and treatment.[96]

55. HR Committee recommended that Norway take concrete steps to put an end to the unjustified use of coercive force and restraint of psychiatric patients.[97] CAT urged Norway to provide clear regulations on the use of restraints and other coercive methods in psychiatric institutions; and establish a system for the collection and publication of uniform statistical information on such use, including the incidence of electroconvulsive treatment.[98]

56. CESCR recommended that Norway take steps to ensure that irregular migrants have access to all the necessary health care services.[99]

I. Right to education

57. CESCR expressed concern that the quality of education and student performance showed significant discrepancies between municipalities. It recommended that steps be taken to assist municipalities that show lower student performance and education quality in recruiting qualified school staff and in providing adequate support for the development of quality education.[100]

58. CEDAW urged Norway to raise awareness of the important role of the education system in overcoming differentiated professional choices and potentially unequal future prospects for women and men. It also urged Norway to implement measures to eliminate gender stereotypes and structural barriers that might deter girls' and boys' enrolment in non-traditional educational and occupational choices.[101]

59. CRC encouraged Norway to educate parents about the value of early education and provide places in good quality kindergartens for all children; and urgently advise municipalities to introduce the new language curricula in the schools so that children can better follow class instruction.[102]

60. UNESCO recommended that Norway integrate human rights education and training in school curricula.[103]

61. CRC recommended that Norway conduct a study on how the aims of the revised school subject, Religion, Philosophies of Life and Ethics, are achieved and what kind of support teachers need in order to adequately implement the objectives of this subject. It further recommended that Norway examine the educational objectives and practices of isolated religious communities with respect to their compatibility with the child's right to a holistic, human rights oriented education.[104]

62. CESCR expressed concern about the higher drop-out rate of immigrant students in particular in upper secondary education.[105] UNESCO recommended that Norway take additional measures to ensure the full enjoyment of the right to education by children with an immigrant background and to eliminate discrimination in access to education.[106]

63. CESCR expressed concern that children from minority communities were more likely to experience bullying in schools. It recommended that Norway systematically collect data on bullying in schools, disaggregated by ethnic group; adopt measures, legislative or otherwise, to combat bullying in schools; and assess the effectiveness of such measures in countering the phenomenon.[107]

64. CESCR expressed concern about the very high levels of absenteeism of Roma children of compulsory school age. It recommended that Norway take measures to ensure that all Roma children attend compulsory education, including through making it more accessible for those who travel for a part of the year.[108]

J. Cultural rights

65. The Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples stated that further efforts to facilitate and promote the use of the Sami language were needed to overcome the lingering effects of the history of harsh assimilation policies, which banned the use of the Sami language and *yoiking*, a traditional Sami form of song, for decades.[109]

66. CERD urged Norway to enable the Sami community to preserve its cultural identity, and to enact an education policy to address the mother-tongue teaching requirements.[110]

K. Minorities and indigenous peoples

67. CESCR recommended that Norway take steps to preserve and promote the traditional means of livelihood of the Sami people, such as reindeer grazing and fishing.[111]

68. CERD recommended that Norway take active measures to prevent discrimination against the Roma and Romani/Tater communities, particularly with regard to their access to public places, housing and employment, and allocate additional resources to find appropriate solutions for integrating children from Roma and Romani communities into the educational system.[112]

69. CERD recommended that Norway take appropriate measures to ensure that the activities of transnational corporations domiciled in the territory and/or under the jurisdiction of Norway do not have a negative impact on the enjoyment of rights of indigenous peoples and other ethnic groups in territories outside Norway.[113]

70. CEDAW urged Norway to ensure that all Sami women were provided with adequate social and health services, and to ensure that gender perspectives were mainstreamed in all policies and programmes regarding the Sami people.[114]

71. CRC recommended that Norway ensure that children from ethnic minority backgrounds and indigenous children have equal access to all children's rights, including access to welfare, health services and schools, and were protected against prejudice, violence and stigmatization.[115]

72. CERD noted the existence of provisions regarding Sami interests in Finnmark in the Mining Law of 19 June 2009, which entered into force on 1 January 2010. However, the cited Law does contain provisions for Sami interests in other places traditionally inhabited by the Sami in Norway that are outside Finnmark.[116]

73. The Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples noted that some Sami representatives had characterized the Finnmark Act of 2005 as not being fully protective of Sami self-determination and land and resource rights, and considered that the extent to which the law genuinely advanced Sami self-determination and resource rights would be determined by its implementation over time.[117] The Special Rapporteur felt that since the process for identifying rights to land under the Finnmark Act was currently under way, the adequacy of the established procedure was not yet known.[118] He noted that the Act did not include provisions related to marine resources.[119]

74. The Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples recommended that Norway finalize the process of clarifying and securing Sami land and resource rights both within and outside of Finnmark County. He further recommended that Norway give close consideration to the findings of the Coastal Fishing Committee and take effective measures to secure fishing rights for the Sami coastal population.[120]

L. Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

75. CERD invited Norway to consider re-opening the Psycho-Social Centre for Traumatized Refugees.[121]

76. CAT recommended that Norway consider reducing the use and length of detention for asylum seekers who enter Norway undocumented, and refrain from returning foreign nationals to States in situations of internal armed conflict or generalized violence, on humanitarian grounds.[122]

77. CAT recommended that Norway guarantee all necessary legal safeguards to ensure the rights of persons facing expulsion or return; offer appropriate legal aid to foreigners in all expulsion cases, if necessary; and ensure that foreign nationals are informed of their rights in a language they understand.[123]

78. CEDAW urged Norway to take specific measures to address difficulties faced by lesbian and transgendered asylum seekers.[124]

79. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) stated that many refugees were compelled to remain for prolonged periods in reception centres due to insufficient placements in municipalities.[125] It recommended that Norway provide municipal placements in a timely manner.[126]

80. CRC recommended that Norway: identify children affected by armed conflicts among asylum seekers and ensure their rehabilitation and social reintegration; expedite the assignment of a guardian to assist asylum-seeking children in understanding the procedures, and clarify the role of the guardian through the initiated guardianship legislation; shorten the waiting period for determining the status of asylum seekers; ensure that age determination procedures are conducted in a scientific, safe, child- and gender-sensitive and fair manner; expand the responsibility of the Child Welfare Services to children aged 15, 16 and 17, and carefully follow up on them during their stay; make sure that children do not disappear and fall into the clutches of traffickers and exploiters; avoid sending children back to unsafe places from which they have fled and use their stay in Norway to equip them with the competencies and skills they will need when they return under more peaceful conditions; ensure the primary consideration of the best interests of the child and his or her affiliation to Norway whenever decisions about the child's future are under consideration.[127]

81. UNHCR expressed concern at the disappearance of children from reception centres.[128] It recommended the strengthening of efforts to prevent minors from going missing from reception centres through enhanced measures to quickly identify and ensure the protection of children against being trafficked or at risk of being trafficked.[129]

82. UNHCR stated that the lack of specialized facilities for unaccompanied children between the ages of 15 and 18 years had proven to be a challenge.[130] It recommended, inter alia, that Norway bring the conditions in reception centres for children in line with relevant international human rights standards, and provide the necessary mental and psychological health services by specially trained qualified staff.[131]

83. CAT expressed concern about the provision in the Immigration Regulations (Section 8-8) which granted unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors between the ages of 16 and 18 years a temporary permit that expires at the age of 18, as this may encourage minors to leave the asylum centres before their permit expires.[132]

84. CAT urged Norway to ensure that persons at Trandum Holding Centre were held in accordance with the law, and for the duration prescribed by law; that all detention conditions were in total conformity with international standards, including the United

Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the treatment of Prisoners, in particular with regard to the sanitary conditions and overcrowding. CERD made similar recommendations.[133]

85. UNHCR stated that with 2013 being an election year there was heated public debate around asylum and immigration issues with increasingly xenophobic tendencies.[134] It recommended, inter alia, that Norway continue to preserve asylum and integration space by strengthening Government efforts in the prevention and fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.[135]

86. UNHCR stated that the Norwegian authorities had been criticized for allowing immigration considerations to outweigh the best interests of the child with regard to those children who had been living in Norway for many years and had thus developed strong ties to Norway.[136] It recommended that further steps be taken to integrate the best interest of the child in all stages of the asylum and migration process, as well as in measures to ensure special protection for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.[137]

87. UNHCR stated that there had been several cases where asylum seekers received sentences of imprisonment or fines for presenting false passports and identity documents, in violation of article 31 of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Despite guidelines from the Norwegian Prosecutor General that persons seeking protection should not be penalized for having false documents, there have been confession cases involving asylum seekers with false documents, in which the asylum seekers have pleaded guilty and received sentences of imprisonment or fines.[138]

88. UNHCR stated that Norway had an obligation to identify and treat stateless persons within its jurisdiction appropriately. It recommended establishing a stateless determination procedure.[139]

M. Right to development and environmental issues

89. In 2010, the independent expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights commended Norway for its unprecedented and progressive decision to cancel the debt of five developing countries arising from its Ship Export Campaign and for explicitly acknowledging its co-responsibility, as creditor, for this debt. He stated that the decision was a departure from the creditor-solidarity principle of the Paris Club. He further commended Norway for its commitment to, and support for, multilateral efforts to promote responsible sovereign lending and borrowing and to develop criteria for assessing legitimacy of sovereign debt.[140]

Notes

[1] Unless indicated otherwise, the status of ratifications of instruments listed in the table may be found in the official website of the United Nations Treaty Collection database, Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, http://treaties.un.org/. Please also refer to the United Nations compilation on Norway from the previous cycle (A/HRC/WG.6/6/NOR/2).

[2] The following abbreviations have been used for this document:

ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
OP-ICESCR	Optional Protocol to ICESCR
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICCPR-OP 1	Optional Protocol to ICCPR
ICCPR-OP 2	Second Optional Protocol to ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death

	penalty
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
OP-CEDAW	Optional Protocol to CEDAW
CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
OP-CAT	Optional Protocol to CAT
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
OP-CRC-AC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict
OP-CRC-SC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
OP-CRC-IC	Optional Protocol to CRC on a communications procedure
ICRMW	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
OP-CRPD	Optional Protocol to CRPD
CPED	International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

[3] Individual complaints: ICCPR-OP 1, art 1; OP-CEDAW, art. 1; OP-CRPD, art. 1; OP-ICESCR, art. 1; OP-CRC-IC, art. 5; ICERD, art. 14; CAT, art. 22; ICRMW, art. 77; and CPED, art. 31. Inquiry procedure: OP-CEDAW, art. 8; CAT, art. 20; CPED, art. 33; OP-CRPD, art. 6; OP-ICESCR, art. 11; and OP-CRC-IC, art. 13. Inter-State complaints: ICCPR, art. 41; ICRMW, art. 76; CPED, art. 32; CAT, art. 21; OP-ICESCR, art. 10; and OP-CRC-IC, art. 12. Urgent action: CPED, art. 30.

[4] Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

[5] 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol; 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

[6] Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field (First Convention); Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea (Second Convention); Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War (Third Convention); Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Convention); Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I); Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II); Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem (Protocol III). For the official status of ratifications, see Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, at www.eda.admin.ch/eda/fr/home/topics/intla/intrea/chdep/warvic.html.

[7] International Labour Organization Convention No. 29 concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour; Convention No. 105 concerning the Abolition of Forced Labour; Convention No. 87 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise; Convention No. 98 concerning the Application of the Principles of the Right to Organise and to Bargain Collectively; Convention No. 100 concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value; Convention No. 111 concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation; Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment; Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

[8] CCPR/C/NOR/CO/6, paras. 13 and 14; CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 7.

[9] CERD/C/NOR/CO/19-20, para. 22.

[10] CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 25; CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 62.

[11] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 42.

[12] UNESCO submission to the UPR on Norway, para. 13.

[13] E/C.12/NOR/CO/5, para. 27.

[14] CERD/C/NOR/CO/19-20, para. 7.

[15] CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 6.
[16] CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 9.
[17] UNESCO submission to the UPR on Norway, para. 19.
[18] Ibid., para. 31.
[19] CERD/C/NOR/CO/19-20, para. 8.
[20] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 15.
[21] CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 8.
[22] E/C.12/NOR/CO/5, para. 5.
[23] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 14.
[24] E/C.12/NOR/CO/5, para. 4.
[25] CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 16.
[26] According to article 5 of the rules of procedure of the International Coordination Committee (ICC) Sub-Committee on Accreditation, the different classifications for accreditation used by the Sub-Committee are: A: Voting Member (fully in compliance with each of the Paris Principles); B: Non-Voting Member (not fully in compliance with each of the Paris Principles or insufficient information provided to make a determination); C: No Status (not in compliance with the Paris Principles).
[27] For the list of national human rights institutions with accreditation status granted by the International Coordination Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (ICC), see A/HRC/23/28, annex.
[28] The following abbreviations have been used for this document:

CERD	Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
CESCR	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
HR Committee	Human Rights Committee
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CAT	Committee against Torture
CRC	Committee on the Rights of the Child
CMW	Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
CRPD	Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CED	Committee on Enforced Disappearances
SPT	Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture

[29] CERD/C/NOR/CO/19-20, para. 26.
[30] CERD/C/NOR/CO/19-20/Add.1.
[31] CCPR/C/NOR/CO/6, para. 17.
[32] CCPR/C/NOR/CO/6/Add. 1.
[33] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 43.
[34] CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 28.
[35] CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7/Add.1.
[36] CAT/C/47/D/312/2007; and A/67/44.
[37] CAT/C/47/D/312/2007, para. 9.
[38] Ibid., para. 8.
[39] For the titles of special procedures, see www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Themes.aspx and www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Countries.aspx.
[40] OHCHR Report 2010, p. 287.
[41] OHCHR Report 2011, p. 174.
[42] OHCHR Report 2012, p. 166.
[43] CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 21.
[44] CCPR/C/NOR/CO/6, para. 14.
[45] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 10.
[46] UNESCO submission to the UPR on Norway, para. 25.
[47] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 22.
[48] Ibid., para. 37.
[49] CERD/C/NOR/CO/19-20, para. 15.
[50] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, paras. 31 and 32(c).
[51] E/C.12/NOR/CO/5, para. 7.
[52] CERD/C/NOR/CO/19-20, para. 9.

[53] CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 20.
[54] CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 7.
[55] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 25.
[56] CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 22.
[57] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 26.
[58] CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 54(b).
[59] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 23.
[60] Ibid., para. 24.
[61] CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 12; CCPR/C/NOR/CO/6, para. 9.
[62] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 22.
[63] CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 45.
[64] Ibid., para. 31.
[65] Ibid., para. 37.
[66] Ibid., para. 56.
[67] CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 13.
[68] CCPR/C/NOR/CO/6, para. 6.
[69] CERD/C/NOR/CO/19-20, para. 14.
[70] CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 59.
[71] CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 19.
[72] Ibid., para. 20.
[73] Ibid., para. 18.
[74] CCPR/C/NOR/CO/6, para. 12; CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 10; CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 58(c).
[75] CCPR/C/NOR/CO/6, para. 13; CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 23; CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 58.
[76] CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 9.
[77] CCPR/C/NOR/CO/6, para. 15.
[78] E/C.12/NOR/CO/5, para. 11.
[79] CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 33.
[80] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 17.
[81] CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 24.
[82] Ibid., para. 25.
[83] CCPR/C/NOR/CO/6, para. 8; CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 30(a).
[84] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 30(b)–(g).
[85] E/C.12/NOR/CO/5, para. 8.
[86] Ibid., para. 9.
[87] Ibid., para. 10.
[88] CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 35.
[89] E/C.12/NOR/CO/5, para. 14.
[90] CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 47.
[91] E/C.12/NOR/CO/5, para. 15.
[92] Ibid., para. 16.
[93] CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 39.
[94] Ibid., para. 40.
[95] Ibid., para. 41.
[96] Ibid., para. 43.
[97] CCPR/C/NOR/CO/6, para. 10.
[98] CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 14.
[99] E/C.12/NOR/CO/5, para. 21.
[100] Ibid., para. 22.
[101] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 28.
[102] CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 49.
[103] UNESCO submission to the UPR on Norway, para. 27.
[104] CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 27.
[105] E/C.12/NOR/CO/5, para. 23.
[106] Ibid., para. 23; UNESCO submission to the UPR on Norway, para. 26.
[107] E/C.12/NOR/CO/5, para. 23.
[108] Ibid., para. 24.

[109] A/HRC/18/35/Add.2, para. 64.
[110] CERD/C/NOR/CO/19-20, para. 18.
[111] E/C.12/NOR/CO/5, para. 26.
[112] CERD/C/NOR/CO/19-20, para. 20.
[113] Ibid., para. 17.
[114] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 32.
[115] CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 61.
[116] CERD/C/NOR/CO/19-20, para. 19.
[117] A/HRC/18/35/Add.2, para. 44.
[118] Ibid., para. 49.
[119] Ibid., para. 54.
[120] Ibid., para. 81.
[121] CERD/C/NOR/CO/19-20, para. 9.
[122] CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 15.
[123] Ibid., para. 16.
[124] CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/8, para. 36(d).
[125] UNHCR submission to the UPR on Norway, p. 3.
[126] Ibid., p. 4.
[127] CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 52.
[128] UNHCR submission to the UPR on Norway, p. 3.
[129] Ibid., p. 4.
[130] Ibid., p. 3.
[131] Ibid., p. 4.
[132] CAT/C/NOR/CO/6-7, para. 22.
[133] Ibid., para. 19; CERD/C/NOR/CO/19-20, para. 13.
[134] UNHCR submission to the UPR on Norway, p. 5.
[135] Ibid., p. 5.
[136] Ibid., p. 6.
[137] Ibid., p. 7.
[138] Ibid., p. 7 and 8.
[139] Ibid., p. 9.
[140] A/HRC/14/21/Add.1, para. 79.